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## SOMNAMBULISM.

We have many striking instances that the mental faculties are by no means torpid during the time of sleep; but in the following circumstances, fully authenticated, there is ample proof that the powers of the mind may, at that period, sustain greater labour than during our waking moments. The subject is one well deserving of attention, both in a medical and a philosophical point of view. Some time since, John Buckridge, the son of a wealthy and respectable farmer, residing near Leeds, in Yorkshire, was placed at a grammar-school, within a few miles of that town, kept by the Rev. Mr. Dunne. Young Buckridge, who was entered as a boarder, displayed very little inclination for learning during the first month of his probation; he talked incessantly of the plough and harrow, the dairy and the farm-yard, the hogs and horses, and wished often and heartily that he was amongst them, and free from the tedious and disagreeable task of poring over books, the contents of which he neither knew nor seemed to wish to know—he thought

“Where ignorance is bliss  
’Tis folly to be wise.”

However, the principal of the establishment neglected no means to endeavour to call forth whatever share of intellect the boy might have: still he evinced no thirst for improvement, and his retentive faculties being extremely defective, he seldom remembered in the morning any part of the lesson committed to keeping on the preceding evening. In this manner the boy continued to plod on wearily with his studies, until the expiration of another month, when a visible change was remarked in the manner that he performed the various school business allotted to him; he that before was only remarkable for dullness and stupidity, became the most correct and generally perfect student in the entire academy; but the cause of this most singular change still remained a mystery. During the usual hours for business he was, as before, listless and inattentive—neither did he relax in his accustomed amusements, so that he did not seem to devote one hour more to study. It happened, however, that one of the ushers, who occupied an apartment contiguous to the school-room, hearing a noise in the passage betwixt the hours of twelve and one, when the family had all retired to rest, was induced to watch, on the supposition that thieves might have broken into the house. On partly opening his door all was dark and silent: but in a few minutes after, young Buckridge ascended from the kitchen with a lamp a-light in his hand, which he had brought from thence.—The usher’s fears now gave way to curiosity, and he determined to watch the movements of the boy, who was evidently enjoying a profound sleep. Buckridge passed on with a rapid, though cautious step to the door of the school-room, which he unlocked, and proceeded directly to the place that he generally occupied, opened a desk in which his books were deposited, took them out, and arranged them in due order before him, and instantly fell to study. The extremely astonished usher, imagining that it might have been a trick of the boy’s, shook and pinched him repeatedly, but to no purpose; he seemed insensible to every thing save only the pursuit of learning, and after having successfully perused the different lessons marked for his business on the following morning, he arose from the seat, and repeated them at the principal’s desk, as if he had been there for examination, in the most perfect and satisfactory manner. The usher having faithfully reported this singular discovery, Mr. D. resolved to watch the following night, and be enabled to question the lad; he accordingly did so, and about the same hour as on the preceding night, young Buckridge arose from his bed and went through the same ceremony, with the addition of writing his English exercises, which were not included in the business of the former day. Having completed this important affair, he proceeded as before to Mr. Dunne’s desk, where that gentleman now really stood, together with the usher, and here he repeated in regular succession his various lessons, replied to many questions put to him by Mr. D., and finally, having delivered in his exercises for examination, returned to the kitchen with the lamp, which

he carefully extinguished, and went back to bed. Being closely questioned in the morning, as to how he had become so perfect in his school business, he could not assign any reason whatever for his being so, and declared that it surprised himself. One thing is certain, that the sleep was by no means counterfeit; the lad knew nothing of it, but almost invariably quitted his bed at the same hour and went through his school business with the same unremitting regularity.

On this subject a writer in the ‘Medical Adviser’ gives it as his opinion, that although the brain, during sleep, performs no functions of reason or instinct, yet the pressure occasioned by the passing of the blood through it, while in that state, produces sensations that agitate in a confused manner, the shadows of those realities which it has been accustomed to bear. It is a recurrence of the sensorium to those actions of thought to which it has been familiar; unmixed with, and unregulated by any impressions from the external senses. It is common to see people move their lips, tongue, and limbs during sleep.—The same cause moves the sleep-walker to the various actions which he performs; and somnambulation is only a dream of more extended power than others. There has been no effectual remedy against this unpleasant and dangerous affection. In many instances terror, properly regulated during the action of sleep-walking, might be tried with benefit on persons who are not very nervous or delicate. The following cases may serve to strengthen this opinion:

Edward Harding, a student of Trinity College, Dublin, who inhabited an attic in the left wing of the University, was in the habit of walking upon the roof in his sleep. One night, having taken a relation, who was locked out, to sleep with him, they had not been in bed more than two hours, when the latter saw him deliberately get up, put on his clothes, strike a light, and sit down, apparently to study. This, however, did not surprise him, as he thought his friend was preparing for the approaching examinations. In a few moments he observed him opening the window, and immediately proceeding to walk out of it upon the roof. Recollecting that his friend had the habit of sleep-walking, he pursued him cautiously. The day was just dawning, and he could see him distinctly walking along the parapet with destruction within an inch of him. Actuated with strong fear for his friend’s safety, he proceeded in the gutter of the roof, until he came behind Mr. Harding, who now stood at the extreme end of the building, and seemed to look down upon the distant earth, with the greatest *sang froid*, and, seizing him suddenly by the arm, pulled him upon him into the gutter, there holding him by force, notwithstanding his violent exertions to disengage himself, until at length he became quite awake, and sensible of his perilous situation. He never afterwards walked in his sleep, although he used to get out of bed at night, and mope about for a moment or two. But he would awake in the greatest terror, which, however, soon dissipated; and he rested well the remainder of the night.

A lady in Scotland is said to have been cured by a similar effect. She was the daughter of a gentleman who inhabited an old romantic house in Dumfriesshire; and sundry strange noises, music, &c., having been heard by himself and his domestics about midnight, in a certain room, it was considered to be haunted. A friend having been on a visit at the house, the conversation turned upon the circumstance of the haunted apartment, when the guest, who was a young man not to be frightened by a ghost, proposed to sleep in it. This was acceded to, and he retired to the “abode of horrors,” amidst the prayers and pity of the wondering domestics. About one o’clock, while he was yet sitting at the table reading, the door was opened, and a female, in a long white robe, entered. The figure proceeded to different parts of the room, and at length sat down to an old spinnet, and played some pretty airs. The young man now perceived it was no ghost, but *bona fide* his host’s daughter. He approached her to applaud her performance, and the lady having stood up, took her hand to conduct her to the door, when she awakened, and perceiving her situation, retired almost overcome with terror. This adventure completely cured her. We would

recommend, in cases of sleep-walking, to seize the arms suddenly, and halloo in the ears until the sleeper awake; or the application of a jug of cold water, by pouring it suddenly upon the head. In this latter case, however, care should be taken to have the body well rubbed with dry towels after the operation.

#### ANECDOTE OF OLIVER CROMWELL.

One day as Cromwell was walking with Lord Broghill in one of the galleries of Whitehall, a man very meanly clad presented himself; Cromwell immediately quitted Lord Broghill, and, taking the stranger by the hand, showed him into his closet. Here Cromwell learned from him that the Spaniards were sending a considerable sum to pay their army in Flanders; that this sum was aboard a Dutch vessel, and the Jew described the very part of the vessel where the money was stowed. Cromwell immediately despatched advice of this to Sir Jeremy Smith, who was cruising in the channel, with orders not to fail in seizing the Spanish treasure as soon as the Dutch ship should enter the straits. When it appeared, Smith sent a message demanding to visit it; but the Dutch captain answering that he would suffer none but his masters to come aboard his ship, Smith threatened to sink him.—The Dutchman, too weak for defending himself, at length submitted. The money was found and sent to London: Cromwell received it, and soon after seeing Lord Broghill, told him, that were it not for the poor Jew they had seen a few days before, that good fortune would have slipped out of his hands.

#### OPINIONS OF LORD BYRON AND DR. JOHNSON ON THE SUBJECT OF LOVE.

It is curious to compare the ideas entertained on this subject by two men the most opposite in nature—the one a poet and a sensualist, the other a stern moralist and philosopher.

Lord Byron thus finely pictures the *beau ideal* of love.

“Oh, Love, no inhabitant of earth thou art!

An unseen seraph, we believe in thee;

A faith, whose martyrs are the broken heart;

But never eye hath seen, nor e'er shall see

Thy unimagined form as it should be.

The mind hath made thee, as it peoples heaven,

Even with its own desiring phantasy;

And to a thought such shape and substance given,

As haunts the unquench'd soul, wearied, wrung, and riven.”

Doctor Johnson, more intelligibly and practically, thus speaks on the subject:

Those that have loved longest love best. A sudden blaze of kindness may, by a single blast of coldness, be extinguished; but that fondness, which length of time has connected with many circumstances and occasions, though it may for awhile be suppressed by disgust or resentment, with or without a cause, is hourly revived by accidental recollection. To those that have lived long together, every thing heard, and every thing seen, recalls some pleasure communicated, or some benefit conferred—some petty quarrel, or some friendly endearment.”



HERMITAGE OF ST. EIRC:

To the south of the handsome little village of Slane, which lies about twenty-four Irish miles to the north of the metropolis, on the margin of the river Boyne, are the ruins of the Hermitage of St. Eirc, who is said to have resided in the abbey of Slane, and to have died in the year 544. In 1512, the period at which the ancient abbey of Slane was renovated and refounded by Christopher Fleming, the then Lord of Slane, there were still two friars of the order of St. Francis dwelling in a recess of

the Hermitage. They were of course removed to the abbey, on which fresh endowments had been made. Several members of the Slane family lie interred within the walls of the Hermitage.

#### EPITAPH ON A MISER.

Here lies old father Gripe, who never cried ‘*Jam satis*,  
Twould wake him did he know you read his tombstone  
gratis.